

IN THE DRAWINGS

Applicant is submitting herewith an amended version of FIG. 2. Please replace the existing version of FIG. 2 with the amended version.

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 6, 8 – 10, 12 – 15, 17 and 18 are pending in the present application. Claims 7, 11 and 16 are canceled, wherein claims 7 and 16 are being canceled by the present amendment. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicant is amending FIG. 2 to show a disk identified by reference numeral 52, as mentioned in the specification at page 5, line 30.

Applicant is amending the specification to correct grammar, correct some erroneous reference numbers, and to direct the reader's attention to particular steps shown in the drawings.

In the Office Action, claims 1 – 9, 10 and 12 – 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (hereinafter "AAPA") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0091945 to Ross¹ (hereinafter "the Ross publication"), or vice versa. Claims 1 and 10 are independent claims. Additionally, page 3 of the Office Action mentions several issues with recitals in claim 1. Applicant is clarifying an aspect of each of claims 1 and 10 that is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited combination of AAPA and the Ross publication. Applicant is also amending claim 1 to address the several issues presented on page 3 of the office action, and making similar amendments to claim 10.

Claim 1 provides for a computer-implemented method for determining authenticity of a business partner. The method includes, *inter alia*, for a case where a matching step fails to find a match, (i) presenting a registration template to a business partner for registration in a business database, and (ii) updating the business database with registration data.

¹ The Office Action does not affirmatively identify the publication number, i.e., 2002/0091945. However, this appears to be the only publication to Ross of record in the application. See, for example, PTO-892 that accompanied an office action dated 11 FEB 2008.

The above-noted aspects of claim 1 are described in the specification in a paragraph beginning at page 8, line 4, with reference to FIG. 3, steps 72 and 74.

The Ross publication is directed to a verification engine that has limited access to a plurality of databases (Abstract). With regard to the limited access, the Ross publication, at paragraph 0031 states:

[I]nformation itself is never directly accessible by the verification engine or the authentication client. The verification engine simply provides a gateway to the information ... (emphasis added).

Applicants submit that whereas the Ross publication expressly states that information is never directly accessible by the verification engine, and that the verification engine simply provides a gateway to the information, the system in the Ross publication affirmatively prevents access to information in databases. Modifying the system in the Ross publication to update a database would require a change in its principle of operation, and arguably render it unsuitable for its intended purpose. Consequently, the Ross publication (whether considered alone or in combination with another reference) cannot be asserted in a rejection of a claim that includes **updating a business database** with registration data, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of AAPA and the Ross publication.

Claims 2² – 6, 8 and 9 depend from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claims 2 – 6, 8 and 9 are also patentable over the cited combination of AAPA and the Ross publication.

Claim 10 includes a recital similar to that of claim 1. As such, claim 10, for reasoning similar to that of claim 1, is patentable over the cited combination of AAPA and the Ross publication.

² The Office Action, on page 5, in a discussion of claim 2, mentions GUSTAFSON, but does not affirmatively base the rejection of claim 2 on Gustafson. Applicant is assuming that the mentioning of GUSTAFSON is an intended reference to U.S. Patent No. 5,659,731 (hereinafter “the Gustafson patent”), as listed in a PTO-892 that accompanied an office action dated 5 JUN 2007. Nevertheless, whereas the system in the Ross publication affirmatively prevents access to information in databases, and whereas claim 2 depends from claim 1, claim 2 is patentable over a combination of AAPA, the Ross publication and the Gustafson patent.

Claims 12 – 15, 17 and 18 depend from claim 10. By virtue of this dependence, claims 12 – 15, 17 and 18 are also patentable over the cited combination of AAPA and the Ross publication.

Claims 7 and 16 are canceled. Thus, the rejection thereof is rendered moot.

Applicant is requesting reconsideration and a withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 1 – 9, 10 and 12 – 18.

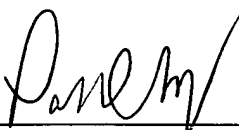
As mentioned above, Applicant is canceling claims 7 and 16, and clarifying an aspect of each of claims 1 and 10 that is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited combination of AAPA and the Ross publication. Applicant is also amending claim 1 to address the several issues presented on page 3 of the office action, and making similar amendments to claim 10.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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